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THE FAIR MAID OF MEGUNTICOOK.

The
Fair Maid
of
Megunticook.

A Legend.



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Dedicated

TO THE MEMORY OF

Miss Lenora French,

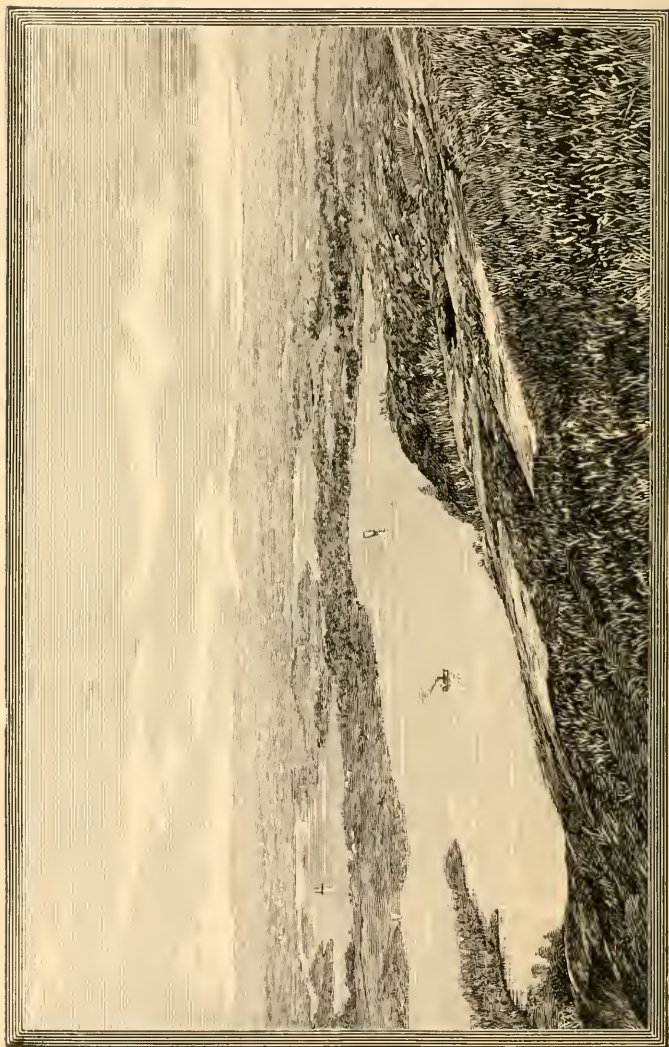
WHO LOST HER LIFE BY FALLING FROM THE BOLDEST CLIFF OF

MT. MEGUNTICOOK, CAMDEN, MAINE,

MAY 5TH, 1864.

BY

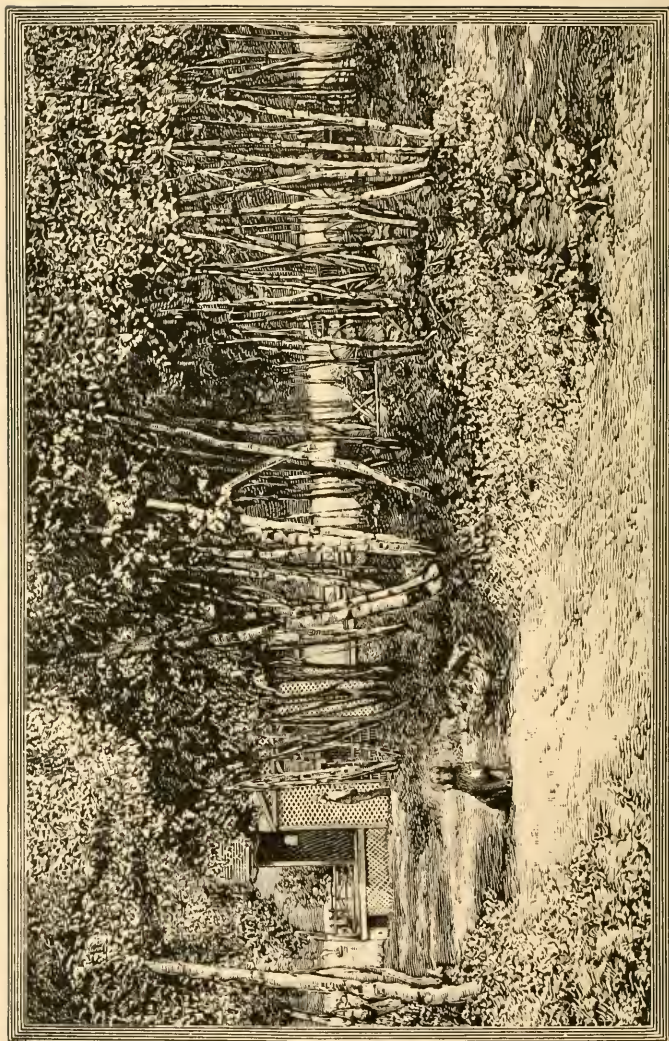
GEO. H. CLEVELAND.



BIRD'S EYE VIEW.—LAKE MEGUNTICOOK,



COTTAGES AT LAKE CITY.



CAMP RABBIT—REAR VIEW.

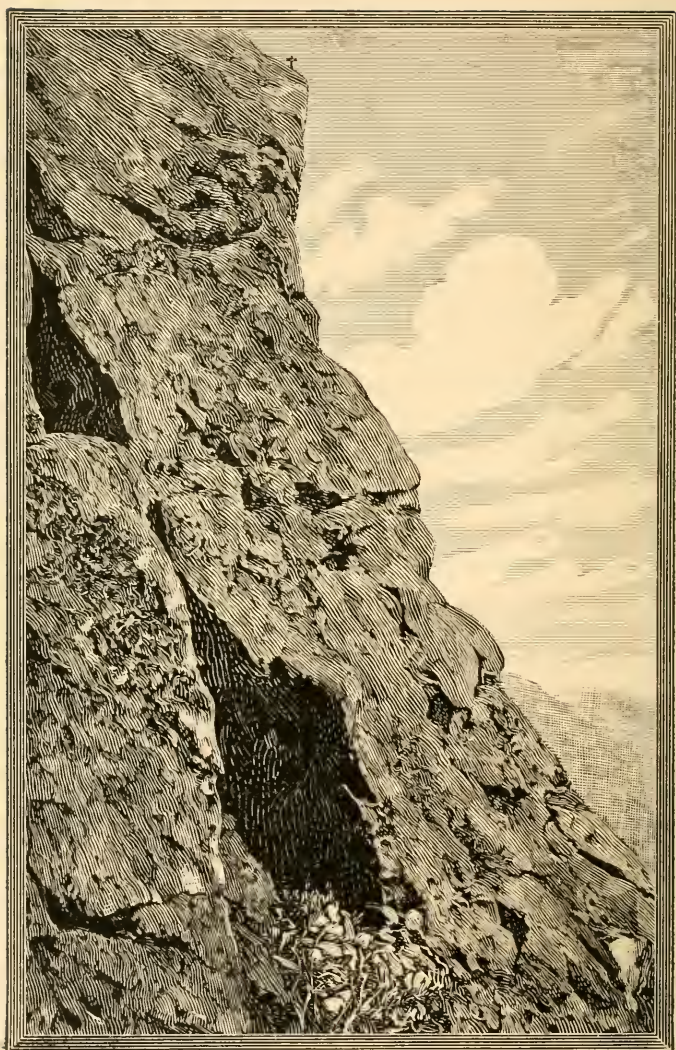
Preface.



HAPPY remembrance of pleasant incidents of the past is sweet ; and those who spent last season at Lake Megunticook, Camden, Maine, will look back with pleasure — possibly tempered with sadness — on those happy days of the past. Lake City, Camp Rabbit, Isle of Pines, Alden's Island, Maiden's Cliff, Balance Rock, Pine Tree Bluff, Rustic

Bridge, etc., are names coupled with happy thoughts ; and when we hear one spoken, or see a view representing them, we feel to have met an old friend. In making up this little volume, our aim is to furnish a keep-sake to those who cherish such thoughts. On the literary merits or demerits we ask the critic to touch lightly. We make no pretensions, and have no aspirations in this direction, but would invite those gifted with poetical inspirations to visit Lake Megunticook and its beautiful surroundings, and diet for awhile on the poetical food Nature here furnishes ; and we believe a work may be produced of true merit.

AUTHOR.



MAIDEN'S CLIFF—LOOKING SOUTH.

Megunticook.

Thou monster !

Thy rugged heights, thy lofty cliffs,

Thy deep ravines, thy dire abyss,

Thy nature's stubborn will,

Are praised alike by old and young ;

And generations yet unborn

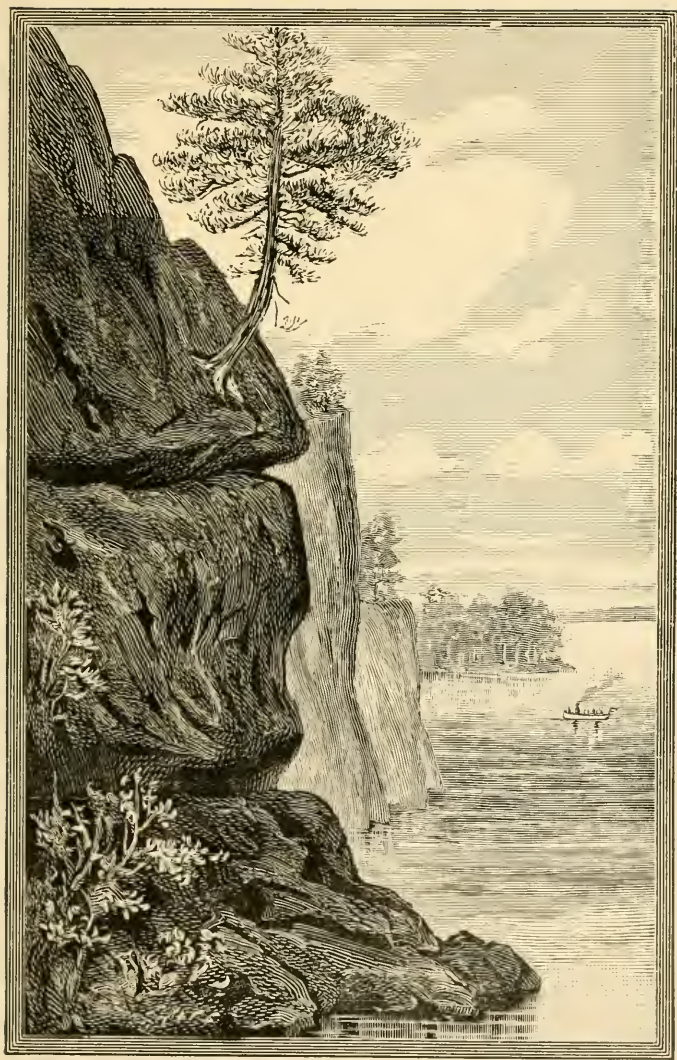
May bow their heads to honor thee

And seek to laud thy majesty.

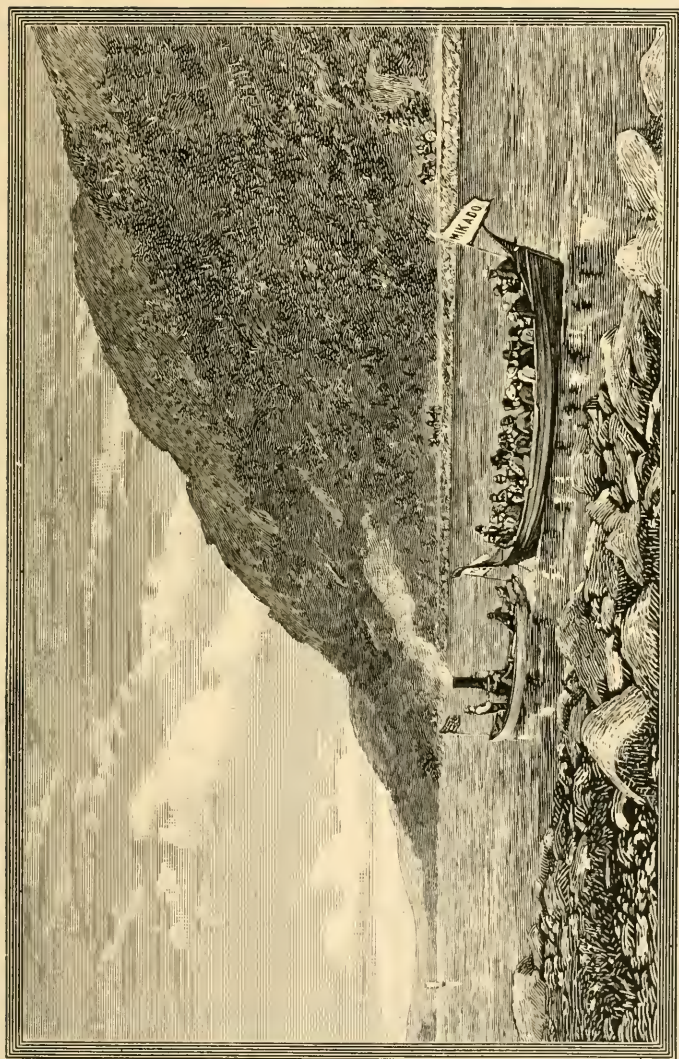
Yet time can ne'er erase the truth—

'Tis sealed with blood of lovely youth—

Thou art a monster still !



PINE TREE BLUFF.



TURNPIKE,—NORTHERN VIEW,

Dedicatory.



ON a beautiful May morn, in the year 1864, a small party of young people started off with joyous hopes and happy hearts for a jolly May ramble. Away they went, o'er hillside farms, through shady dells, to the bold cliffs of the ever-enchanting Megunticook—from the summit of which, under a cloudless sky, on a beautiful, clear Spring day, may be seen the many islands in the distant bay, and sailing vessels as far off as the eye can reach, miles away over the deep, blue ocean. The beautiful lake beneath, its river like a silver thread meandering its serpentine course to the ocean—villages, farms, forests,—a view supreme, above, below, afar! After feasting awhile on this beautiful scene, the company somewhat separated—were gathering May flowers, harebells, violets, etc. During this time the wind had commenced blowing fresh from the north, and, unnoticed by the others, one of the party, Miss Lenora French, of Lincolnville, a beautiful and accomplished young lady, had remained firmly fixed—entranced, so to speak—on this, the boldest cliff of Mt. Megunticook, when by a shriek or scream she called the attention of the others of the party just in time to see her fall over the steep precipice, and next to see her life-

less, mangled form hundreds of feet below, at the base of the mountain, firmly fixed in death's embrace. These facts have been gleaned from the parents and friends of this unfortunate victim of twenty-three years ago, and are probably all the particulars that are known, or can be known, by earthly friends.

Many theories have been advanced as to the cause, and many writers have exercised visionary ideas in expressing views concerning the sad event. As an illustration, I quote from the *Boston Sunday Herald*, Sept. 4th, 1887, the following :

"The cliffs of Megunticook rise in sheer precipice something like a thousand feet or more. At one of the highest points a great cross stands in gaunt relief against the sky, telling a sad tale which has the interest of greater reality than legendary 'Lovers' Leaps' common to nearly every place where there is a high ledge. The cross marks the spot where a young woman, who wandered from home on the eve of her wedding, flung herself to instant death in the terrible abyss."

The theory, however, most generally believed is that she, having looked for a long time into the terrible depths below, became bewildered, and on turning to leave the spot the strong north wind caused her to lose her balance, when she fell, screaming for assistance—too late for earthly help. A cross has since marked the spot, and the cliff is now called "Maiden's Cliff."

Suggested by this sad fatality, I have written this legend, which I most respectfully inscribe to her memory.

GEO. H. CLEVELAND.

Camden, Maine, October, 1887.



MAIDEN'S CLIFF—LOOKING NORTH.

Legend.

9 **T**WAS fine. A cloudless sky
O'er-crowned this, Nature's favored spot,
Where lakelets' laughing waters vie
With lofty cliffs and cragged rock.
To-day all Nature seems to smile,—
Megunticook, towering to the skies,
Sets forth its charms, and for awhile
It bears the palm of Paradise.

A maid, a young, fair, lovely maid,
On whom good fortune had displayed
The richest and most bounteous share
Of worldly gifts and beauty rare,
Would often climb Megunticook,
And, from its lofty summit, look
Out on the islands in the bay,
And vessels sailing far away.

The human mind is not content ;
And none can bide the sentiment
That worldly joys give heavenly bliss
Or fill the "cup of happiness."



VIEW ON TURNPIKE LOOKING SOUTH.

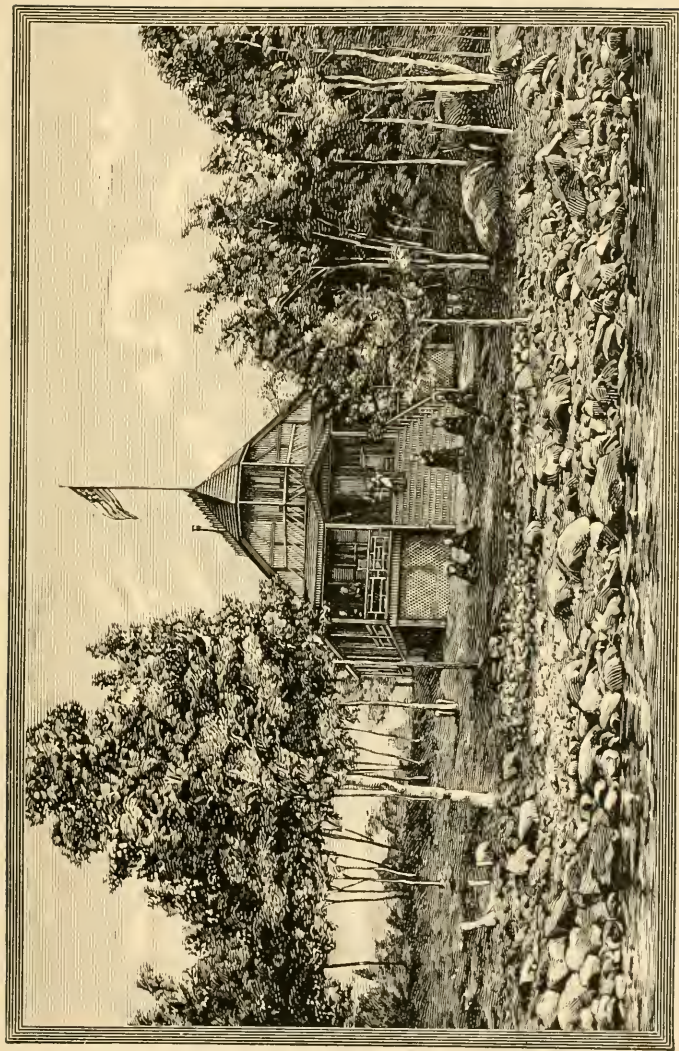
*N*O, that is not ordained to man :

*No such consummation can
Be fraught on earth ; and when you say
The goal you've sought for many a day
At last is reached, just as before
You still desire that " something more."*

*She, in her beauteous, youthful pride,
While strolling o'er the mountain's side,
Felt sad, for she had never found
An object for her love profound.
Her love—that deep, pure, gentle love
Such as devoted Christians have—
Was latent ; and she seemed to be
Engaged in profound reverie.*

*Suddenly the spell was broke ;
She heard, from an adjacent nook,
A sound, as like a " still, small voice ;"
Advancing, it addressed her thus :*

*" Fair maiden, thou art ever fair—
The silken tresses of thy hair,
Thy laughing eyes, thy charming form,
Are beautiful to look upon ;
But thy true worth to me doth seem
Exceeding fitness for a queen.*



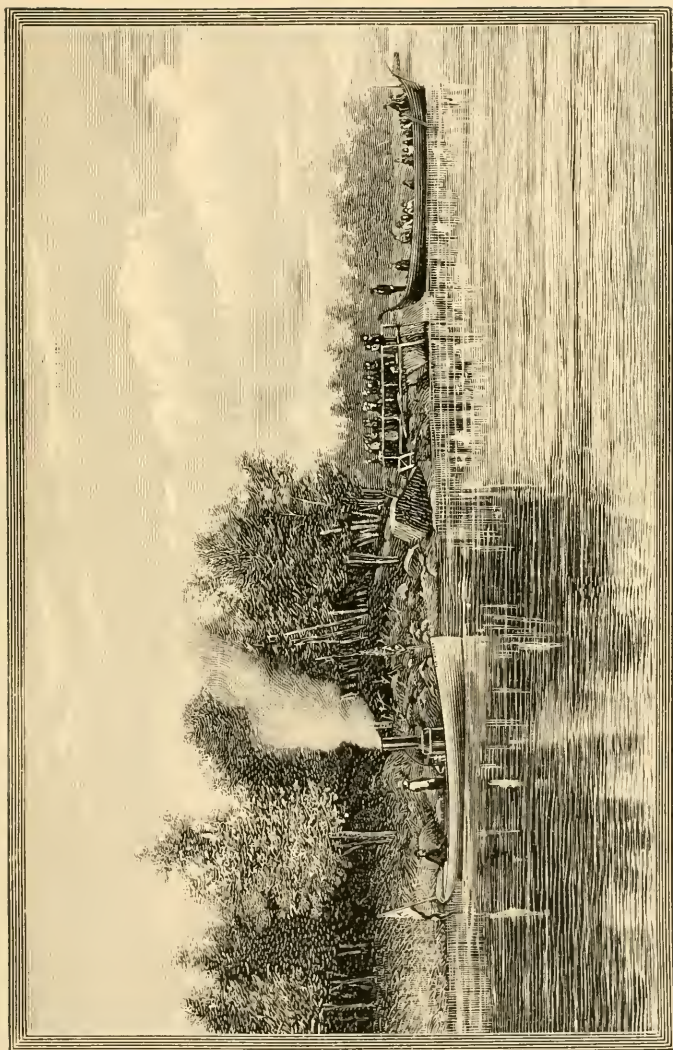
GEO. H. HILL'S COTTAGE, LAKE CITY.

FAIR maid, methinks I hear you say,
Who and what are you, tell me, pray?
I am a King of Kings, my dear—
A nature's element, and peer
Of yonder Sun, who shines so bright,
And Moon, who governs us at night.

*My name is Boreas ; and I claim
To rule the air on sea and main.
I am to all an honored guest ;
All mankind bow at my behest—
And should they question my control,
I'd shake this world from pole to pole.*

*Oh, do not fear, my gentle maid ;
Of me thou should'st not be afraid,
For I would rather fear remove
And gain instead thy constant love.
I fain would win thee for my Queen ;
Then we together may be seen
Reigning triumphant o'er land and sea
Through all time and eternity.*

*But 'tis decreed—my royal sphere—
No flesh and blood shall enter there.
This sacrifice I ask you make,
And share with me my vast estate.*



STEAMBOAT LANDING—ISLE OF PINES.

6 *NOW can that be ? I hear you say ;*
Ah ! listen ; let me name the way.

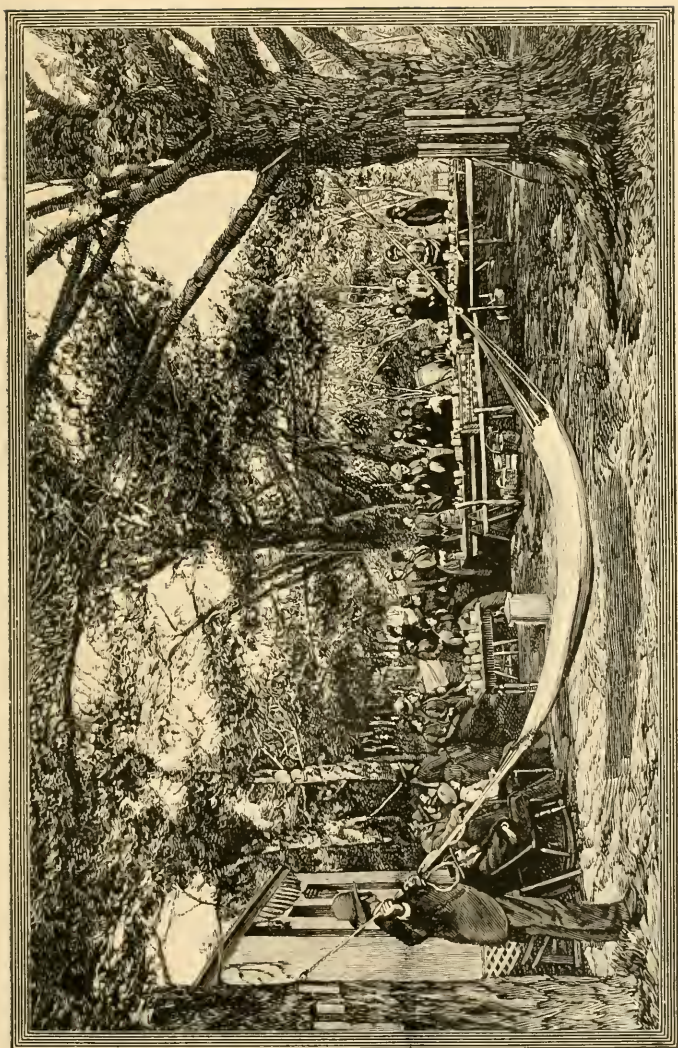
*You come with me, my fairest maid,
Down, down this precipitous grade,
And when arrested from the fall
You ' shuffle off this mortal coil.'*

*Then you and I will be as one ;
And o'er these mountain tops we'll roam,
Seeing all things by angels seen,—
I, King Boreas, and you, my queen."*

*Charmed and deceived, she gave consent,
And with the monster down she went—
Down, down to eventide—
Down Megunticook's steepest side—
Tumbling, rumbling, whirling by
Life's scenes, for all eternity.*

*Alas ! she bids adieu to earth,
And loving friends bemoan her death ;
Although in sadness they weep here,
Happiness triumphs in her sphere.*

*And now, when summer sun goes down—
When Autumn north-winds wail and moan—
Many, with upturned faces, look
For the " Fair Maid of Megunticook."*

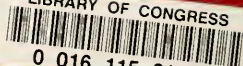


PICNIC SCENE.—ISLE OF PINES.

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